

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

- 5 1. A process for providing a financial clearinghouse for a supply chain comprising the steps of:
- a) defining a plurality of business units comprising the supply chain;
- b) providing financing by the clearinghouse for at least one business unit wherein the supply chain is a factor in determining the degree of financing for
- 10 the business unit; and
- c) coordinating supply chain transactions by the financial clearinghouse between the plurality of the business units.
2. The process of Claim 1, wherein the supply chain transactions
- 15 comprises the flow of financial assets.
3. The process of Claim 2, wherein the flow of financial assets comprises payments for value-added services.
- 20 4. The process of Claim 2, wherein the flow of financial assets comprises payments for materials.

5. The process of Claim 2, wherein the flow of financial assets comprises payments for logistic services.

6. The process of Claim 2, wherein the flow of financial assets
5 comprises credits for value-added services.

7. The process of Claim 2, wherein the flow of financial assets comprises credits for materials.

10 8. The process of Claim 2, wherein the flow of financial assets comprises credits for logistic services.

9. The process of Claim 1, wherein the supply chain transactions comprises the transfer of materials.

15 10. The process of Claim 9, wherein the transfer of materials comprises the transfer of raw materials.

11. The process of Claim 9, wherein the transfer of materials
20 comprises the transfer of parts and components.

12. The process of Claim 9, wherein the transfer of materials comprises the transfer of finished products.

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13. The process of Claim 1, wherein the supply chain transactions comprises logistic services.

5 14. The process of Claim 13, wherein the logistic services comprises transportation of materials, further including transactions arising from import and export activities.

10 15. The process of Claim 13, wherein the logistic services comprises storage of materials.

16. The process of Claim 1, wherein the supply chain transactions comprises the exchange of information.

15 17. A computer system comprising:
a bus;
a memory unit coupled to the bus; and
a processor coupled to the bus, said processor for executing a process for providing a financial clearinghouse for supply chains comprising the steps
20 of:

a) defining a plurality of business units comprising the supply chain,

b) providing financing by the clearinghouse for at least one business unit wherein the supply chain is a factor in determining the degree of financing for the business unit; and

c) coordinating supply chain transactions by the financial clearinghouse
5 between the plurality of the business units.

18. The computer system of Claim 17 wherein the supply chain transactions comprises at least one of the following:

payments for value-added services, payments for materials, payments for
10 logistic services, credits for value-added services, credits for materials, credits for logistic services, transfer of raw materials, transfer of parts and components, transfer of finished products, transportation of materials, storage of materials, and the exchange of information.

15 19. A computer-usable medium having computer-readable program code embodied therein for causing a computer system to perform the steps of:

a) defining a plurality of business units comprising the supply chain,
b) providing financing by the clearinghouse for at least one business unit wherein the supply chain is a factor in determining the degree of financing for
20 the business unit, and

c) coordinating supply chain transactions by the financial clearinghouse between the plurality of the business units.

20. The computer-usable medium of Claim 19 wherein the supply chain transactions comprises at least one of the following:

payments for value-added services, payments for materials, payments for logistic services, credits for value-added services, credits for materials, credits
5 for logistic services, transfer of raw materials, transfer of parts and components, transfer of finished products, transportation of materials, storage of materials, and the exchange of information.

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